

## **TU CASA, INC. ANNUAL REPORT 2010**

Throughout 2010, Tu Casa has remained dedicated to serving victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, child sexual abuse, stalking, elder abuse and hate crimes, and their families throughout the 6 counties of the San Luis Valley. Thanks to a strong Board of Directors and staff, Tu Casa has made significant internal improvements and strengthened community partnerships.

Tu Casa, Inc. experienced a 22% rise in the number of victims seeking our services during 2010. A fiscal audit of 2009 and a financial review of 2008 were completed. Our accounting procedures are now compliant with all of our grantors. Grants from private foundations were increased by 63 %(\$32,000) in 2010 compared to 2009. Tu Casa was also able to successfully re-obtain Sexual Assault Prevention Funding, and therefore was able to hire Angela Sillas Green, MA, as a part-time Prevention Education Specialist.

Tu Casa has reconnected with several law enforcement agencies, strengthened relations with the Office of the District Attorney, and has plans to further collaborate with 12<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Probation. In joint leadership with the SLV Victim Response Unit, the activities of the Alamosa County Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) was reinitiated in September 2010, with active representation from the Office of the District Attorney, the Alamosa County Sheriff's Office, Alamosa County Department of Human Services, the Immigrant Resource Center, the Alamosa Police Department, and the Sexual Assault Nurse's Exam (SANE) Program. This collaboration has led to the successful prosecution of an incest case in Rio Grande County, as well as to the filing of incest charges in Alamosa County.

Tu Casa's new website, launched February 2010, enables donors to give online, as well as allows clients and visitors to learn more about the victimizations we serve, our events, view photos, and make appointments to utilize our services. In February 2010, 1,187 people visited our website. 338 people visited Tu Casa's Facebook page since August 2010.

Most excitingly, thanks to the hard work of volunteers from the GWFC Women's Citizenship Club and a \$7,500 grant from the El Pomar Foundation, Tu Casa was able to reopen its onsite shelter in September 2010. Since September, the shelter has provided 8 victims and children with 188 nights of shelter. Tu Casa is now able to provide victims with a longer-term shelter option. We continue to partner with La Puente and local motels to fulfill clients' emergency shelter needs, also.

### ***Throughout the year, and in all 6 counties of the SLV, Tu Casa provides:***

- 24-hour hotline that responds to crisis needs of victims and their children during the night, on weekends, and holidays.
- Victim Advocacy
  - Assistance filing and removing protective orders, as well as divorce and custody paperwork
  - Court accompaniment
  - Referrals to other social services, including all 5 local Departments of Human Services, La Gente, La Puente, the Alamosa Food Bank, Colorado Rural Legal Services, the SLV Immigrant Resource Center, COVA, SLV Mental Health Center, Alamosa Housing Authority, as well as medical providers, the Office of the District Attorney and law enforcement..
  - Emergency rental assistance, supplies, gas and relocation services
- Emergency shelter, motel-stay, and longer-term shelter placement
- Individual and group counseling for both children and adults
  - EMDR Therapy for adult and child trauma sufferers

- Parenting Classes
  - Life skills classes
  - Girls Circles
  - Community outreach, education & awareness
    - Support and training for law enforcement agencies
    - Monthly educational seminars on DV/SA related topics (*Lunch n' Learn*)
    - Free trainings for Tu Casa staff, other local social service agencies, nonprofits, law enforcement, the Office of the District Attorney and the general public
    - Distribution of educational materials
    - Educational presentations for valley-wide preschool to college students, school staff/faculty/administrators and parents about violence relationships, sexual assault and violence prevention
    - Events in honor of DV Awareness Month, SA Awareness Month and community collaboration
- \*All services and educational materials are provided in both Spanish and English. Hearing impaired clients have access to services through text messaging and ASL-certified interpreters.

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The following is a summary of some of our statistics for 2010:

- 299 new victims served
- 31 adults and 10 children used 287 nights of shelter
- 2,372 people attended 124 educational awareness presentations
- Over \$23,000 in emergency financial assistance was provided to victims and their families

### COLLABORATIONS

Tu Casa is a proud member of the following groups:

- San Luis Valley Anti-Violence Task Force (SLVAVTF)
- San Luis Valley Sexual Assault Prevention Task Force (SLVSAPTF)
- Alamosa and Conejos Counties Inter-Agency Oversight Groups (IOGs)
- Colorado Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV)
- Colorado Coalition Against Sexual Assault (CCASA)
- Valley Community Fund
- Alamosa County Sexual Assault Response Team (SART)

Staff attend monthly CPT and APT meetings at the 5 local Departments of Social Service. Executive Director, Ashley Riley Lopes, attends weekly Sex Offender Treatment staffings as a victim representative to ensure perpetrators in treatment are compliant and held accountable. She also attends monthly IOG meetings to ensure clients have access to wrap-around services.

Tu Casa has signed MOUs with: La Puente, the Immigrant Resource Center, the Center for Restorative Programs; the Sexual Assault Nurses' Examination (SANE) Program at San Luis Valley Regional Medical Center; the 12<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Attorney's Office; the 12<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Courts; the Department of Social Services of Alamosa, Rio Grande, Mineral, Saguache, Conejos and Costilla counties; the Sheriff's Departments of Saguache, Costilla, Conejos and Alamosa counties; the First Response Victim Assistance Advocate programs of Alamosa/Costilla, Saguache and Conejos counties; the San Luis Valley Comprehensive Community Mental Health Center and Adams State College Counseling and Career Center.

## EVENTS

Tu Casa Spring Benefit Dinner was held March 27, 2010, and honored the organizations 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary as well as survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. Over 100 people attended the benefit, held at Bistro Rialto in Alamosa, and hosted by Keith Cerny, owner of *The Valley Courier*. The event featured survivor speakers Siobhan Halderson, Amanda Foor, and Stephanie Jones. Tu Casa also unveiled their new promotional video, created through a technical assistance grant from the El Pomar Foundation.

Drumming for Peace was held October 1 2010 in Memorial Park, Alamosa, CO. Performers included the ASC Percussion Studio, the Crestone Kaminari Taiko Drummers, the Semilla dancers, and poetry from the SLVMHC Women's Empowerment group. The annual event attracted many members of the community, and Mayor Kathy Rogers kicked off the event by officially proclaiming October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

The Gingerbread House Festival was held December 11, 2009, at the Inn of the Rio Grande. Over 200 children were present to decorate gingerbread houses and visit with Santa Claus. Volunteers from the local chapter of Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) and the Conejos County Mentoring Program helped with the event, as well as other volunteers from Adams State College.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors met regularly in 2010. Their meetings were held at noon on the third Wednesday of every month, along with several extraordinary meetings and informal gatherings. The members of the Board serve two-year terms that may be renewed by mutual agreement of the Board. The officers hold their position for one year, elected each year by the members of the Board of Directors at the February meeting, and are incoming as of the March meeting. Board members serve without compensation and agree to sign a conflict of interest and confidentiality agreement when joining. The Board continues to increase its members in aims of diversifying.

Our thanks to the many hours donated by our 2010 Board members, listed below:

- President, Debbie Sowards Cerny, Ads Manager, *The Valley Courier*
- Vice President, Isabel Medina Keiser, Diversity Officer, Adams State College
- Treasurer, Paula Medina, Program Director, Center for Restorative Programs
- Secretary, Blair Fernandez Haynie, Owner Napa Auto Parts and Fernandez Chili, Co.
- Bill Yohey, Town Manager, La Jara, CO
- Michael Vigil, Community Advocate, La Puente Home
- Julie Nuanes, Administrative Assistant, Valley Wide Health Systems
- Renata Patton, Community Member

## STAFF

At the end of 2010, the current staff at Tu Casa, Inc. and their years of experience here:

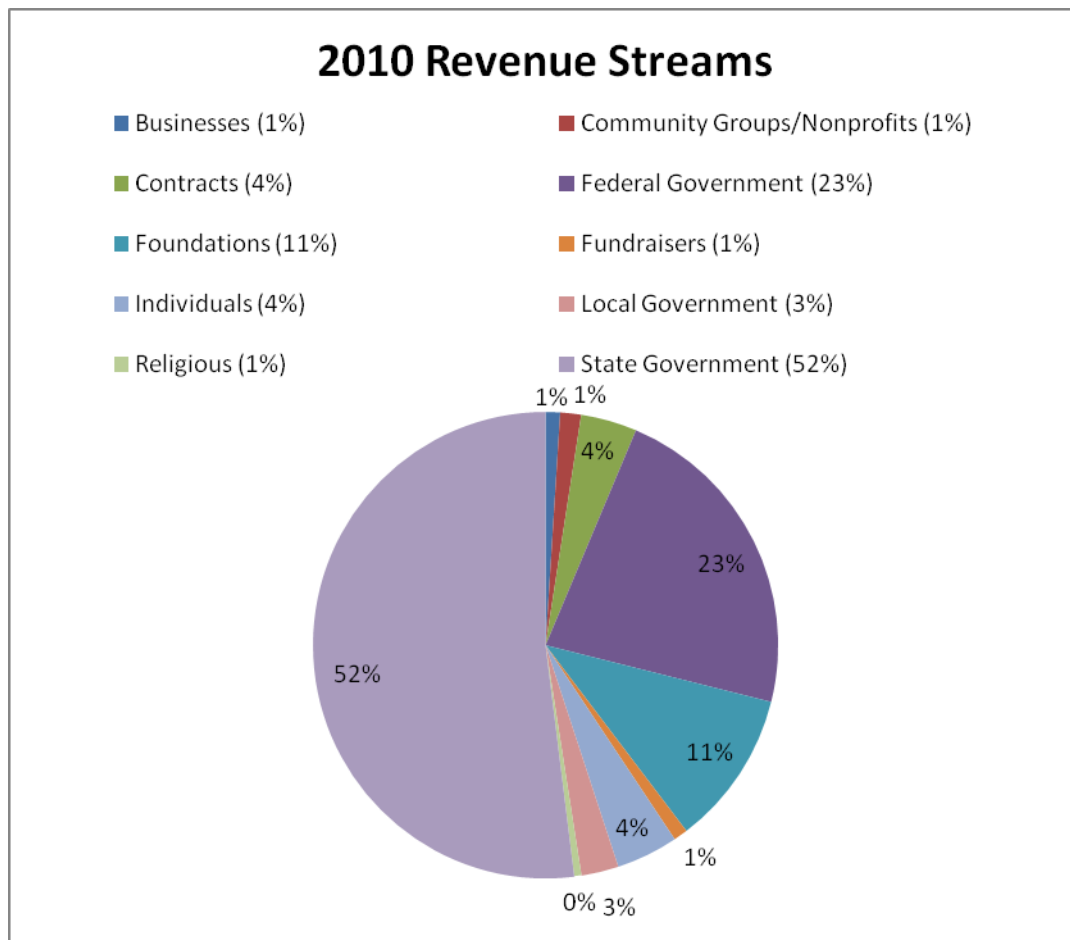
- Ashley Riley Lopes, Executive Director, 1 year 6 months
- Irene Gonzales, Receptionist, 3 months
- Danah Gonzales, Outreach Education Specialist, 1 year 8 months
- Angela Silas Green, Prevention Education Specialist, 2 months
- Jamie Bogner, Counselor, 1 year 7 months
- Mike Mascarenas, Counselor, 6 months
- Carmen Murillo, Lead Victim Advocate, 3 years 3 months
- Lupita Garcia, Victim Advocate, 1 years 2 months
- Trinda Hosselkus, Victim Advocate, 1 year

Over the past year, there were 6 crisis hotline advocates working part time. They provided immediate crisis intervention, support and advocacy including, but not limited to, transportation to safe shelter, civil stand-bys and

emergency supplies and food. They reported directly to the Lead Victim Advocate. These advocates donated over 4400 volunteer hours in 2010, only getting paid a small stipend for being on-call. All of these advocates undergo a minimum of 45 hours of training in order to serve in this capacity for Tu Casa, Inc.

The staff conducts weekly meetings, every Thursday afternoon to discuss current hot topics, debrief, inform each other of upcoming events, and clear up miscommunications. The Receptionist takes minutes. The Executive Director ensure that all client-services staff members are fulfilling their duties. Grant compliance is discussed also, as well as upcoming fundraising events and trainings. The Executive Director and Lead Victim Advocate hold weekly staffing, Monday mornings, to discuss requests for financial assistance, shelter placements, and any current advocacy client issues. The counselors hold weekly staffing on Thursday afternoons and undergo supervision by a Licensed Professional Counselor weekly.

REVENUE STREAMS



UPDATES

Tu Casa’s 2-year federal Rural grant expires in September 2011, but the Executive Director hopes to be recontracted for future funding. An application for a 3-year Sexual Assault Demonstration Initiative (SADI) federal grant was submitted in November 2011, and appeals to individual donors and churches are sent out quarterly.

The Board of Directors plans to add additional members at its January 2011 meeting, including Monte Vista Chief of Police, Rick Needham. The Board continues to be active in fundraising, and a financial committee will meet quarterly to review Tu Casa’s finances in depth in 2011. Increased participation in organizational visioning and exploring potential corporate sponsorships are also on the Board’s agenda.

Tu Casa plans to hold a Mardi Gras Fundraiser, themed “Unmask the violence, and let the good times roll!” March 5, 2011 at the Alamosa Elks Lodge. The event will feature traditional Mardi Gras and jazz music, a silent “Give to Chair-ity” auction and a live DJ.